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# FOREWORD

**T**HE material progress of our nation has no parallel in history. The energy of our people has triumphed in every field of material effort. The elemental forces have been harnessed; the earth has yielded its treasures; commerce, agricultural inventions have poured out their riches beyond the wildest dreams of the old alchemists.

But what of Art? While the material achievements of Americans impress one as the work of Titans, we have a lower degree of aesthetic culture, compared to our material power and energy, than any of the great nations of the world. Our whole fabric of American civilization is unbalanced, lopsided.

The stock objection to this is: that we are a young nation. But this is not so: in the sense that we had to develop from an aboriginal state, as did the Greeks and Romans. We inherited, at first hand, the culture of Europe and the Orient. Years ago we arrived at a point in the development of the creative power of nation-building, when culture should have gone hand in hand with material progress.

If we continue to immolate ourselves in the fierce strife for money and power, and lull ourselves with the excuse: that we are a young nation, then fifty years, a hundred, will pass, and we will have created a monstrous fabric of brute force and vulgarity, at the cost of losing, by atrophy, our racial genius for Art.

The chief problem in aesthetic culture in this country at the present time is: to allure into the different Arts some of the stronger intellects that, heretofore, have been directed to industrialism, commerce and the professions; also, to awaken in our people a sense of the intense Ugliness and drab Monotony of the average environment in America; finally, by contrast and example, to teach them that the true joy of life is: The Consciousness of Beauty, and that the true fulfillment of our destiny will not be accomplished until, like the Venetians, we create an empire in Art equal to our empire of material conquest. "The Art World" has been established to help to direct American thought toward correcting this defect in our civilization.

In offering "The Art World" to the public, the managers wish to state that it will be a distinctly American Magazine, with a special purpose, one that is not only constructive but re-constructive as well. That purpose is: To restate the ancient Gospel—that the only Art worthy of the support of a nation is such as is truly Beautiful, Sane and Decent, a gospel which has, by word and deed, been derided by certain degenerate forces in Europe, until the World of Art is in a state of perplexity and Anarchy.

In this hour of calamity and of growing intellectual and aesthetic bewilderment, there is need of a Magazine which will discuss with frankness and Common-sense every phase of the Eight Arts: Architecture, Drama, Landscape-Architecture, Belles-Lettres, Music, Painting, Poetry and Sculpture, and will prove that Life and Art act and re-act, dynamically, upon each other; and that, therefore, if either is to endure on a high plane, both must ever be inspired by the loftiest spirit and motives.

This Magazine will be conducted primarily in the interest of the Public—which includes the artist. Hence, perforce, it must be more or less didactic and ethical, although not, perhaps, lacking the saving sense of humor.

The managers, therefore, ask for the support, in especial, of the Laymen of the country, most of whom, we feel sure, are deeply concerned that our country should make an orderly but certain progress in Life and Art toward greatness, along those lines which common-sense will indicate as possible.

We purpose to encourage a movement in the World of Art to adopt more sharply cut Definitions of such words as: Art, Poetry, Beauty, Style and Manner, Realism and Idealism, as well as other terms habitually used in Art in order that Laymen and Artists may more easily understand each other.

To accomplish our main purpose we will be compelled to censure, but our criticisms will engage theories and tendencies rather than men. Therefore, such works of Art as are evidently efforts to do something really fine and Enduring, we will treat with the respect they merit; such as are, clearly, mere Art dodgers may be treated with bantering humor, when sane and morally clean, but flayed when they are a social menace.

It is well to reiterate that, when a work of Art is exposed or performed in a gallery or theatre or public place, and cultured people invited to pass judgment upon it, every citizen has the right to criticize it. In all the Arts, even men of great talent may become afflicted with progressive insanity and produce Monstrosities, which may obtain a certain vogue on the strength of the better work they did in their youth. Such works may, if allowed to pass unrebuked, become a social poison.

We propose to be strictly independent of all persons, schools and institutions, and to be guided only by fundamentally sound principles of aesthetics and Social Service.

Of course we claim that, while a social purpose never did give permanent value to a technically weak and ugly work of Art, a technically great and beautiful work is all the more valuable by virtue of some lifting social purpose.

Under the department of "Town and Country Embellishments" we purpose to do our utmost to help in the work of beautifying our land: by pointing out Civic and other Ugliness and suggesting reforms, in the hope of making our cities and countrysides more lovely and lovable.

We strongly recommend to all Laymen and Students to preserve with special care the Twelve first numbers, because in these a complete Theory of Art, as dictated by common-sense, will be presented—in plain English, free from the metaphysical jargon of the pundits who, from their "Ivory Towers," befog the World of Art with cryptic and mephistophelian verbiage, free also from the balderdash inflicted upon the public by would-be Highbrows, and by the postulants of a Bohemia which only exists in their naïve imaginations.

These Twelve numbers will remain a safe Guide for the layman and student in their study of the elements of true greatness in all the Arts.

We shall not consider it necessary to use the sweet Addisonian style of writing, full of restraint, mixed sometimes with hypocrisy, and born of moral fear; nor shall we hesitate, if needful, to use the downright language of a Carlyle or the rapier thrusts of a Cervantes, when moved to deal body-blows to any vicious or insane tendency. Our effort will be to give a helping hand to those engaged in cleaning out the Augean stables of the World of Art and trying to rid it of crooked aesthetics: devised to condone and exploit corrupt Art.

While the literary methods of our Contributors will be scrupulously respected, we, ourselves, shall not hesitate: to coin a word, in order to clarify an idea, or to depart from the conventional system of punctuation, etc., when we think it needful.

But, first and foremost, by the support and co-operation of the cultured laymen of the country, we hope to help along the creation of an American school of Art so fine and rich, that it will bring to our Democracy a spiritual triumph, in the not distant future, as great as the material triumphs of the past.

THE EDITORS